

TO THE MUSLIM YOUTH

Fatwaas of Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullaah)

The following are questions and answers on some important topics: 'How are we to view those in the past who have died who have made errors in their works or accused of bida'h? How should they be referred to after their death? Who or what is a mu'tadi' (innovator) and how are we to treat people we may deem as such?

In the Name of Allaah, and may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allaah. This tape, a continuous series of *fataawaa* (rulings) of Shaykh Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee, was recorded by Abu Laylaa al-Athharee on the 7th of Sha'baan in the year 1413, corresponding to the 31st of January 1993. Shaykh Naasir has addressed a series of questions sent by the youth from the United Arab Emirates; important questions which it is hoped will benefit the *ummah*.

Questioner: What do you say, O Shaykh, about those who claim that mercy should not be asked for those who contradict the belief of the salaf like Ibn Hajar and an-Nawawee, ibn Hazm and ibn al-Jawzee and those like them from the scholars of the past, as well as those modern leaders like Hasan al-Bannah and Sayyid Qutb, considering that you are familiar with what Hasan al-Bannah wrote in his book *Muthakkiraat ad-Da'wah wad-Daa'iyah*, and Sayyid Qutb in *Fee Thilaal al-Qur'aan*.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah): We believe that *rahmah* (mercy); that is, a statement supplicating to Allaah to have mercy upon someone; is permissible for any Muslim and forbidden for any disbeliever. This answer refers to the belief which is held in the soul of the individual. So whoever believes that those who were mentioned in the question and those similar to them are Muslims, then the answer is known from what was said previously; that is, it is permissible to make *du'aa* (supplication) for them that Allaah has mercy on them and forgives them. And whoever considers those mentioned in the question to be non-Muslims - may Allaah not let it be so - then asking for Allaah's mercy for them would not be permissible, because mercy has been made forbidden for the disbelievers. That is the response relative to what came in the question.

Questioner: They say that it was from the *minhaj* (methodology) of the salaf (pious predecessors) that they would not ask for mercy for the people of innovation. Consequently, since those who were mentioned in the original question are considered amongst the people of innovation (i.e. *ahlul bid'ah*), they do not ask for mercy for them.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: We have already stated that mercy, or the supplication for mercy, is permissible for any Muslim, and not permissible for any non-Muslim. If that is correct, then the second question is without foundation. If it is not correct, then there is basis for discussion. Didn't those who have been labeled by some as among the people of innovation have *salaatul janaazah* prayed on them? It was from the belief of the salaf, which has been acquired by the *khalaf* (later generations), that we pray behind the righteous as well as the un-righteous. We also pray *salaatul janaazah* (funeral prayer) for any righteous or un-righteous Muslim. The disbeliever, on the other hand, has no *salaatul janaazah* performed for him. Therefore, those whom the question circulates around, whether or not they were among the people of innovation, should one pray *salaatul janaazah* for them or shouldn't one do so? I do not wish to get into a discussion on this unless I am forced to. If the answer as to whether one should pray *salaatul janaazah* on them or not is that one should, then the answer is finished. The subject has ended and there remains no place for conversation for the second question, as the grammarians would put it. If [you believe that] it is not acceptable to perform prayer for them, then the opportunity for discussion is open and it may proceed.

Questioner: If it is said that we do not pray for them because they are from among the innovators, what would your answer then be?

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: What is the evidence that you do not make salaah for them?

Questioner: They use as evidence the practice of the salaf and they make a distinction between sinful people and the innovators, who make innovations in the religion. The salaf did not used to make salaatul janaazah for the people of innovation, nor did they sit with them or have link with them. And on the basis of that, they made this claim.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: What was the question?

Questioner: Whether we should make salaah for them or not.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: No, you extended your answer to the question and missed the point. The question was "What was the evidence?" You mentioned the claim and the claim is not the same as evidence. And the claim was that salaatul janaazah should not be made for the innovating Muslim.

Questioner: There is no evidence, they only use as evidence the actions of the salaf.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: Is the action of the salaf evidence?

Questioner: This is what they claim.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: Where is the evidence for this evidence?

Questioner: The arguments are usually very general on this issue.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: Didn't the scholars of the salaf cut off certain individuals for some sin or innovation? Did that mean that they used to declare them disbelievers? No, it did not. Therefore, they ruled that they were Muslims. We do not have any in between position between the Muslim and the disbeliever. Either they are Muslims and treated as Muslims, or are disbelievers and are treated as such. We do not have any intermediary position, as claimed by the Mu'tazilites, who say that there is a place between belief and disbelief. Furthermore, may Allaah bless you my brother, this is merely a claim; that is, that the salaf did not make funeral prayers for the innovators in general. It is merely a claim which has found its way into the minds of some people, the minds of some good people, who have taken on several issues with great enthusiasm, not accompanied by correct knowledge based on the statements of Allaah and the Messenger of Allaah.

I have presented to you a reality which no two people will differ on. That is, that either the individual is a Muslim or that he is a disbeliever. And the Muslim, regardless of what his state is, has salaatul janaazah performed for him. In addition, his inheritance is distributed among the inheritors, his body is washed and shrouded, and he is buried in the burial place for Muslims. If he is not a Muslim, he is thrown like a seed, and buried in the graveyard for the disbelievers. We do not have any middle position.

However, if an individual person does not make salaatul janaazah for this Muslim, or some scholar does not do so for a Muslim, that does not indicate that salaah for this individual is not permissible. This means that the individual was trying to practice some wisdom and address some point, which could not be fulfilled by other than him. As in the case of the hadeeth, which you must remember, in which the Prophet (pbuh) had said in some of its narrations: "Make salaatul janaazah for this companion of yours." The Prophet (pbuh) himself did not make salaah for the individual. What do you think? Is the Prophet (pbuh), who prevented himself from making salaatul janaazah for a Muslim, more significant or

is a salafee scholar who refuses to pray on some Muslim more significant? The refusal of the Prophet (pbuh) is more important. If the Prophet's refusal to pray for a Muslim does not indicate that prayer for that Muslim is prohibited, then obviously, the abandonment of the salaah by a scholar of the salaf does not indicate that one should not make salaatul janaazah for the individual.

Furthermore, if it did indicate that salaah should not be performed for him, does that then mean that one cannot ask for Allaah's mercy and forgiveness for the individual, considering that we believe that that individual is a Muslim? Briefly, the refusal of some of the scholars of the salaf to pray for some Muslims because of some of their innovations does not cancel the legality of salaah for every Muslim of the like. This is because this was from the general category of warning away from an evil and indicating to those similar to them the correct manners, as the Prophet (pbuh) had done with regards to that individual who he did not pray for. The only thing that was on him [i.e the man whom the Prophet (pbuh) refused to pray for] was that he died owing a debt for some part of the war booty which he had kept for himself. The refusal of the Prophet to pray for an individual, which is more important, as well as the refusal of some of the scholars of the salaf to do so, does not negate or cancel the legality of salaah for such individuals, that is, the innovating Muslims.

From here, there is a necessary research that needs to be done. It is just as necessary for us to know who the innovator (al-mubtadi') is as it is for us to know who the disbeliever is. There is a question which must be asked at this point. Does anyone who falls into disbelief through actions become a disbeliever? Likewise, does the label of "innovator" in its totality apply to anyone who falls into an act of innovation, or is that not the case? If the answer is that it is not the case, then we can continue to look into the subject. And if it is not clear, then it needs to be clarified. I will repeat the issue involved in this question with additional detail. What is an innovation? A new affair or a new action which contradicts the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh). The one who does it does so desiring to increase his or her closeness to Allaah, may He be Blessed and Exalted. Does everyone who commits an innovation become an innovator?

Questioner: No.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: Who then is the innovator?

Questioner: One to whom clear and convincing evidence has been brought and he insists on continuing to practice the innovation which he has committed.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: Good. So those about whom it was stated that mercy should not be asked for them, was clear evidence brought to them? Allaah knows best. What then is the foundational principle regarding them; that they are Muslims or disbelievers? It is that they are Muslims. Therefore, it is permissible for one to seek for Allaah's mercy to be on them. The foundational principle, again, is that we should be able to seek forgiveness or mercy for them. Isn't that the case? Then the issue has ended.

It is not permissible for us to adopt a *mathhab* (school of thought) today in which we say that it is not permissible to request Allaah's mercy for so-and-so, so-and-so, and so-and-so among Muslims in general, or even in particular, or with regards to the scholars amongst Muslims. Why? For two reasons, which will be a summary of what was previously said. The first reason is that they are Muslims. The second reason is that if it is that we know that they are innovators, we do not know that evidence has been brought to them and that they insisted on following the innovation and continuing in their misguidance. Because of that, I say that among the grave mistakes today is that the young practicing Muslims who firmly hold on to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, according to their belief, fall into contradicting the Qur'aan and the Sunnah without realizing it. Consequently, according to their *mathhab*, it is my right to label them as innovators, because they have gone against the Qur'aan and the Sunnah.

However, I would not go against my *mathhab*; the basic principle regarding their state is that they are Muslims, and that they are not intending the innovation, and that they are not rejecting clear evidence which is brought to them. Instead, we say that they have made a mistake while seeking what is correct. And if we realize this, we will escape from many of the affairs which are prevalent at this time.

From this very same situation is that group known as *at-Takfeer wal-Hijrah*, which was in Egypt. It spread its ideas, some of which reached Syria in the days when I was there, as well as today. And we had some brothers there who were on the path of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, who were *salafees*, who

were affected by this false call and they abandoned prayer in congregation. Even *salaatul jum'ah* was abandoned. They used to make *salaah* in their homes until we had a meeting with them. We had three different sittings. The first session was between *Maghrib* and *'Ishaa*, and they refused to pray behind us *salafees*. They said about myself, "We rely on your books", and in spite of that, they would not pray behind me. Why? Because we did not label those who they declared as disbelievers the same way.

The second sitting was in the midst of their headquarters, and the discussion continued until the middle of the night. However, some good signs began to appear, *al-hamdulillaah*, as they began to respond to our call to the truth. So when we announced and established the prayer at almost midnight, they prayed behind us. That was the second session. Regarding the third session, it continued from after *salaatul 'Ishaa* all the way until the *aatha*an of *Fajr*. This was the decisive sitting, and they have been with us since then, which is close to twelve years. *Al-hamdulillaah*. All it had been was mere misunderstandings, which came to them due to the lack of *fiqh* (deep understanding) of the Allaah's book and the Sunnah. Perhaps you can understand, brother Khaalid, that the *fiqh* of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah is not easy in our times today, after our inheritance of many different *mathhabs* and many, many sects in *'aqeedah* (belief) as well as in *fiqh*.

Therefore, the new student of knowledge will not be able to guide them to the root of all of these differences until he goes through a very long period of study of what is now called *al-fiqh al-muqaaran* (comparative *fiqh*), and the study of the various evidences of those who have differed in the fundamental principles and the tertiary principles in the different schools of thought. In reality, it requires a long life, firstly. Secondly, it requires the guidance of the Lord of the worlds before Allaah enables the Muslim to actuate the call which the Messenger left as a *sunnah* for us to follow. He used to say in some of his night prayers, "O Allaah, guide me in those issues regarding the truth in which people have differed. Indeed, You guide whomsoever you wish to the straight path." Because of all this, we advise our growing youths today, who are on the *mathhab* of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, to unite and contemplate matters carefully, and not to declare rulings based on some of the apparent meanings of the evidences. This is because it is not suitable for a Muslim to stop at every seemingly obvious ruling. Otherwise, we would end up living in a confused state of knowledge which has no ending to it.

I think you know that the *mathhab* which is closest to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah is the *mathhab* of the people of *hadeeth*. You know that the *hadeeth* scholars relied on narrations of some innovators if they were reliable, truthful, good narrators. This means that they did not include them among the group of disbelievers, nor among those on whom the seeking of mercy for is forbidden. In fact, there are leading scholars who are followed today, about whom no true Muslim scholar doubts that they are Muslims; people who are considered notable scholars. Despite that, they have contradicted the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and contradicted the position of the *as-salaf as-saalih*, in a number of issues.

I mean by that, for example, an-Nu'maan ibn Thaabit Abu Haneefah, may Allaah's mercy be on him, who said that *eemaan* neither increases nor decreases. He also said that it is not permissible for a Muslim to say "I am a believer, inshaa'Allaah". And if he says "inshaa'Allaah", he is not a Muslim. There is no doubt that this is an innovative statement in the religion because it is in contradiction to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. However, he did not intend an innovation. He was seeking the truth but erred. Consequently, to open this avenue of doubt about the leading Muslim scholars of the *ummah*, whether they are amongst the *salaf* or the *khalaf*, is in contradiction to what the Muslims have followed. And our Lord, Allaah the Most Great and Glorious, has said in the Qur'aan: **"Whoever goes against**

the Messenger after the evidence has been made clear to him and follows a path different than that of the Muslims, We will link him with whatever he has chosen. And We will put him in Hell, an evil return."

I want to remind you of a reality on which there is no difference, and then I want to add to it something which the young people of our times are not thinking about. The reality is the statement of the Prophet (pbuh) mentioned in a number of *hadeeths*: "*Whoever declares a Muslim to be a disbeliever has himself disbelieved.*" This is a reality in which there is no doubt. The well-known additional clarification of this *hadeeth* is found in some of the other narrations. That is, if it is that the one who has been declared a disbeliever is in fact a disbeliever, then he is correct. Otherwise, the goes back to him. This does not require any research because the *hadeeth* is very clear. However, I would like to add to it saying that in the case of someone who declares a Muslim to be an innovator, it is either that the labeled Muslim is in fact an innovator, or the one who made the declaration is himself an innovator. This is the reality which I had said to you earlier: that our young people are declaring our scholars to be innovators and **they are the ones who themselves have fallen into innovation**. However, they do not know; they do not intend to commit innovation. In fact, they fight innovation.

The following saying of the past applies to them: "*Awradahaa Sa'dun wa Sa'dun mushtamil, maa haakatha yaa Sa'du, tooradul ibil.*" Because of that, we advise our youths to hold fast to acting according to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah within the bounds of their knowledge, and not to have the audacity to accuse others whose knowledge they cannot compare their knowledge to. Nor can they compare their understanding to these people, nor perhaps even their righteousness; that is, people like an-Nawawee and Haafith ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaanee. Who in the Muslim world today in anywhere near these two?

Leave Sayyid Qutb, because he is a regular individual. We praise him for his efforts, his *jihaad*, but this does not in any way change the fact that he was really only a writer. He had literary skills, but he was not a scholar. So there is no surprise that a number of things would come from him which contradict the correct methodology. As for those who were mentioned along with him, like an-Nawawee and ibn Hajar, it is wrong and oppressive to refer to them as being among the people of innovation. I know that they were amongst the Ash'arites, but they did not intend to contradict the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. It is only that they mistakenly thought two things regarding the *'aqeedah* which they had inherited from the Ash'arites. The first is that Imaam al-Ash'aree actually held that position, when in fact, that was only his early position because he recanted his statement. And secondly, they mistakenly thought it to be correct, when it is in fact incorrect.

Questioner: Is it correct that the scholars of the *salaf* would not declare someone to be from *Ahlus Sunnah*; that is, on the *minhaj* of the *salaf*; unless he had the characteristics of *Ahlus Sunnah*? And if he innovated, or praised those who innovated, he would be considered among them? As the scholars of the *salaf* used to say that whoever says that Allaah is not above the heavens is a Jahmite.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: There is some of that present, but do not forget what I said earlier. That does not mean that he is not a Muslim, as was exemplified in the Prophet's (pbuh) refusal to make *salaatul janaazah* for the one who had taken some of the booty without permission or the one who killed. This was considered a part of the educating process, but it does not mean that he was not a Muslim. Another point is that the narrations from the *salaf*, if they are not in large amounts and are not all agreeing, it is not suitable to take from a few individuals, or an individual, among them a *minhaj*. Then that methodology becomes in contradiction to the practice of the *salaf* themselves.

It is well known that a Muslim does not go outside the circle of Islaam because of a sin or innovation he has done. So if we find what contradicts this basic rule, we turn to what I mentioned from the earlier explanations: that this is from the avenue of cautioning and educating. Take, for example, Imaam al-Bukhaaree- and what could make us really understand who Imaam al-Bukhaaree was? Some of the scholars of *hadeeth* left Imaam al-Bukhaaree and did not narrate any narrations from him. Why? Because he used to make a distinction between one who said that "the Qur'aan is created"-such an

individual would be a misguided innovator, a disbeliever, according to the different positions held by the scholars in their expressions- and between one who says "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created".

Imaam Aḥmad considered the one who says "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created" to be in the general category of the Jahmites. And based on that, some who came after the time of Imaam Aḥmad made the judgement on al-Bukhaaree that one should not take narrations from him because he makes the same claim the Jahmites make. However, the Jahmites did not say "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created"; they held that the Qur'aan itself was not the word of Allaah, but one of Allaah's creations. What do we say concerning Imaam al-Bukhaaree who made this distinction and said that "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created", as well as the statement of a *hadeeth* scholar like Imaam Aḥmad, who said that whoever says that "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created" is a Jahmite? It is not possible for us to say both statements are correct, except by making a correct interpretation which follows the basic rules. Before going on, I believe that you will make a distinction along with me between one who says "the Qur'aan is created" and one who says "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created". Correct? Then how would we respond to the statement of Imaam Aḥmad when he said that whoever said "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created" is a Jahmite?

There is no response except what I had mentioned to you: that it was a means of warning Muslims away from making a statement which could be used as a means by which the people of innovation and misguidance, the Jahmites, would promote their beliefs. This is because a person might say, in order to deceive those around him, "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created", while meaning that the Qur'aan itself is created. That does not mean that every Muslim who makes this statement, that is, that "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created", has that same evil intention - like Imaam al-Bukhaaree. He is not in need of anyone to recommend him because Allaah Himself has already done so by making his book the most accepted book in the opinion of the masses of Muslims after the book of Allaah, in spite of whatever differences they have among themselves over other issues.

Therefore, when he said "my recitation of the Qur'aan is created", he intended something which is true. However, Imaam Aḥmad, out of fear, said whoever said whatever is a such and such. Therefore, that should be considered in the category of a warning and not a principle of belief, a belief that whoever said so-and-so is actually a Jahmite. If we find in some of the statements of the scholars of the *salaf* rulings stating that one who falls into an innovation is in fact an innovator, it should be taken from the point of view that it is a statement of warning and not a statement of belief. Perhaps it is also suitable to mention on this occasion the well-known statement of Imaam Maalik: "The setting above is known, and how it is so is unknown, and asking about it is a form of innovation. So expel this man, for he is an innovator."

This famous narration took place in an occasion when a man came to Imaam Maalik and asked him about the rising above the throne, as regards to Allaah. Imaam Maalik responded, "The setting above is known, and how it is so is unknown, and asking about it is a form of innovation. So expel this man, for he is an innovator." He did not become an innovator for merely asking about it; the man wanted to understand something. But Imaam Maalik feared that while questioning, he may make some statements which are against the belief of the *salaf*. So he told them to remove the man from the sitting. "Remove the man, for he is an innovator." Look now how the means have differed. What do you think: if I or any other person of knowledge were asked the same thing by either the generality of Muslims or by specific groups amongst them who have more knowledge, do you think we should give the answer which Imaam Maalik gave? Would we tell the people to get him out of our gathering because he is an innovator? No. Why? Because the times are different.

So the methods which were used in those times were acceptable then, but are not acceptable today because they will harm more than they will benefit. And we can add to this the principle of boycotting, which is known in Islaam. We are often asked, "So-and-so, a friend, doesn't pray, he smokes, and he does this and that. Should we boycott him?" I say, "No, you should not boycott him because boycotting him is what he would like for you to do. Your boycotting him would not benefit him. In fact, it is the opposite, it would make him happy. And it would allow him to continue in his misguidance." Not to

mention, on this occasion, a *Shaamee* saying relative to a man who is corrupt and has abandoned prayer. This man repented and went to pray his first prayer in the *masjid* only to find the door of the *masjid* locked. His response to this was, "You're closed, so I'll drop the prayer." That corrupt individual who has abandoned prayer, does he want the practicing Muslim to boycott him? This is just like the example- "You're closed so I won't bother to pray." The [boycotted] man would similarly say, "I do not need his companionship; I do not want to be with him anyway." This is because the companionship of the righteous with the corrupt prevents the latter from being free to do whatever he wants to do. The corrupt individual does not really want that. Thus, the boycotting of the un-righteous by the righteous is what the un-righteous prefers.

Consequently, the Islaamically legal boycott is intended to fulfill a legal benefit, which is to teach that individual. So if the boycott in no way teaches him a lesson, but in fact, it increases him in misguidance on top of his already misguided state, in such a circumstance, boycotting is not applicable or appropriate.

Consequently, **today it is not suitable to imitate the methods used by the early scholars because they did so from a position of strength and the ability to prevent.** Today look at the how the situation of Muslims is. They are weak in everything. Not only in the governments, but the individuals as well. The situation is as the Prophet (pbuh) described it when he said: "*Islaam began as something strange and it will return again to become something strange, so give glad tidings to the Strangers.*" He was asked, "Who are they, O Messenger of Allaah?" He responded, "*They are people who believed, a few righteous individuals amongst many people; those who disobey them are many more than those who obey them.*" So if we open the door of boycotting and declaring people innovators, we may as well go and live in the mountains. What is obligatory on us today is to call to the way of our Lord with wise preaching and a good expression and discuss with them with that which is better.

Questioner: In order to complete the benefit of this issue, and it is an issue about which there is a number of questions today, I will mention that they say when we advise that we should not ask for Allaah's mercy for them, the seeking mercy for them is not compulsory, it is a permissible thing. We're not making haraam the seeking of mercy for them. We avoid it in order that there not be any form of praise and admiration for those people of innovation. Then those who we may not say are innovators, for example, but we just do not praise them or we do not refer to them as imaams, as leading scholars. For example, if a mention is made of an-Nawawee, we do not refer to him saying "Imaam an-Nawawee said". Or they even avoid narrating from them, or relating certain statements to them, or attributing certain statements to them. Some of the brothers narrated some third hand narrations which are from some of these, and it was said to him, "How can you narrate from these people?" The (latter) are not like those mentioned earlier, like Ibn Hajar or an-Nawawee, but people like Sayyid Qutb or Muhammad Qutb. They say, "How can you narrate from these people and it is so well known that these people are not *salafees*? So you, as a *salafee*, if you narrate from them, you are praising them and giving the impression to people that they are *salafees*." This is a way by which the up and coming fresh students would be fooled or misinformed about these people, or perhaps cause them to become like them in innovation and deviation and being far away from the correct path. Could you please make some comments on these statements?

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: I do not believe that this is their intention, first and foremost. And secondly, if this was in fact their intention, (I do not believe) that this is an acceptable method of educating people, or making them aware. These individuals that you referred to, do they read Fat-hul-Baaree, or do they not read it? Either of these two, if it is supposed, it would be considered error with regards to them. If they say we do not read it, where do they get their understanding for *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree* from? With regards to explanation as well as *fiqh* understanding, understanding from the point of view of the *hadeeth*, regarding the differences as well as the terminologies, etc., they will not find amongst the commentators on *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree* anywhere in the world a "*salafee*" according to their definition. If there is any commentary, it will be brief explanations of headings. As for the vast sea of knowledge contained open to anyone who opens

it, it cannot be found in any of the books that have taken up the task of writing against it. In that case, they would lose a great amount of knowledge. If they meant by their statements to warn the masses of people away- warning people amongst the general things which they warn people away from- that they do not take benefit from the statements of this obvious imaam, scholar, they have lost knowledge. Even though it was possible for them to combine attaining what is good and preventing or avoiding what is harmful and corruptive, as was the way of the scholars.

There is no scholar after the time of Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaanee or an-Nawawee who could do without taking benefit from their commentaries on *Saheeh al-Bukharee* and *Saheeh Muslim*. And as the scholars took benefit from the books of these two great scholars, in a number of issues, they are Ash'arites and they contradicted the *minhaj* of the righteous forefathers; they were able to take knowledge from these two books. Taking knowledge benefited them and avoiding it was harmful. I fear what is behind these statements- these statements mentioned- that there's a warning against warning from their books, in which case this would be a great loss. If they say, on the other hand, no, we do take benefit from their books and we read them and we confirm them, in which case, what is the benefit of these methods; wherein they're refusing to ask for mercy for these scholars? They are Muslims, as we stated in the beginning of our talk. Furthermore, what is the benefit from their statement that they're not saying that it is not permissible to ask for mercy for them, but we won't ask mercy for them. Why? Because he has committed or made an innovation?

As we said earlier, not everyone who makes an innovation is considered an innovator, and not everyone who does an act of disbelief becomes a disbeliever. That individual innovation has become confused to him and for the other, disbelief has also become confused, that is that they're not clear acts of innovation or disbelief. That so-called precaution has no benefit. Furthermore, brother, the *salafeeyah* or the *khalaf*, did the scholars from whom we have inherited this righteous call, was this their position with regards to scholars? Was it like the position of this new group who claim *salafeeyah*? The opposite is the truth. They should be like those who preceded us to this righteous call.

Questioner: Some say that whoever commits a *bid'ah mukaffirah* leaves the circle of *ahlus Sunnah wal jamaa'ah*, and one who commits a *bid'ah mufassiqah* does not leave the circle of Muslims, even if evidence is brought to him and the person continued to do it. Would such a person be still considered the people of *ahlus Sunnah* in such a case?

Shaykh Naasir: What is the *bid'ah mukaffirah* and the *bid'ah ghayr mukaffirah*?

Questioner: The *bid'ah mukaffirah* is where the person makes a statement which is a statement of *kufr* (disbelief), like declaring that the Lord, Allaah, is not above His throne, and statements similar to that. And the *mufassiqah* is like the innovations in acts of worship, like the *mawlid*, for example.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: This is a statement which is not correct. This statement is a product of *'ilmul kalaam*. The distinction made between innovations in *al-usool* (fundamental principles) and innovations in *al-furoo'* (secondary principles), or the *bid'ah* in *ahkaam* (laws) and *bid'ah* in *'ibaadaat* (acts of worship)- this distinction is itself innovation. What if an individual approached one of the Prophet (pbuh)'s Sunnahs like the Sunnah of fajr, and he made it four units. How would this innovation be classified? A *mufassiqah* innovation or a *mukaffirah* innovation- if he made the Sunnah four and insisted on continuing to do it?

Questioner: According to their explanation, it would be classified as a *mufassiqah* innovation.

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: That is a nonsensical statement. Among the things which the *khalaf*, the later generation, have inherited from the *salaf*- and by the term *salaf* here I intend a different meaning than the technical meaning which is understood amongst us- is the distinction between errors in *al-furoo'* and errors in *al-usool*. An error in secondary principles is forgivable, whereas an error in primary principles is unforgivable. The *hadeeth* whose authenticity is well-known: "If a judge makes a ruling and strives to find the truth and is correct, he gets two rewards. And if he

makes a mistake, he gets one reward", that is (supposedly) in the secondary principles. As for the fundamental principles, they are not excusable. That distinction has no foundation, neither in the Qur'aan nor in the Sunnah nor among the statements of the righteous predecessors. What exists in the statements of the righteous predecessors is a strong warning against innovation in general, whether it be in *'aqeedah* or in *'ibaadah*. I mentioned earlier the reality that whoever declares a Muslim to be a disbeliever, has himself disbelieved. And I added to it that whoever declares a Muslim to be an innovator, etc. Because in reality, there is no difference to me between disbelief and innovation.

If a Muslim began an innovation and the innovative reality of it was made clear to him, but he insists on doing it, as in the example which I mentioned earlier, it would be like one who denies that Allaah rose above His creation or denies that the Qur'aan is from His speech, etc. There is no difference between this or that at all, neither negatively nor positively. Positively, we would say that he has disbelieved, based on the condition that we mentioned earlier, that evidence was made clear to him. And the other has disbelieved after evidence has been brought to him. Negatively speaking, there's no declaration of disbelief or apostasy in either case, neither the first nor the second, only with the existence of the condition which was mentioned. I will go back to the statement that the Mu'tazilites and the Khaarijites coincide in some of the issues in which they went astray, and they disagree on some.

For example, the Khaarijites agree with the Mu'tazilites on the position that the Qur'aan is created. The ideas coincide. And as I mentioned before, the scholars of *hadeeth* did not declare the Khawaarij to be disbelievers. Then how do we combine the ideas in our mind, that one who denies a principle of belief is a disbeliever, and one who makes an innovation in *'ibaadah* is a *faasiq* (sinner); and we have the leaders in the science of the narration of *hadeeth* narrating from the Mu'tazilites and the Khaarijites, in spite of the fact that they contradict the authentic *'aqeedah* in a number of issues. Those who say that Allaah's speech is created will also deny seeing Allaah in the next life. That denial along with the previous denial makes our previous definition applicable to them. It is disbelief. But not everyone who falls into an act of disbelief has become a disbeliever. How do we rationalize the fact that the leaders of *hadeeth* scholars and the scholars of the *salaf*, like Ibn Taymeeyah and Ibn al-Qayyim, ruled that the Khaarijites and Mu'tazilites were astray, without any doubt, but they do not refer to them as being disbelievers, apostates from their religion? Because they lay down the principle of the possibility that the issue was confused to them firstly; and that the evidence was not brought against them, secondly. Let us return to the basis of our original subject: that those people were innovators. But we do not know if they intended innovation or was evidence of their error brought to them, etc. And that is the methodology of the scholars. They rule that the Mu'tazilites were astray, and the Khaarijites were astray, and the Ash'arites were astray in a number of issues, but they do not declare them to be disbelievers. They do not expel them from the circle of Islaam based on the possibility which was mentioned earlier.

They go back to two issues. I'll mention them again. The first is that they did not intend an innovation and contradiction. Secondly, we do not know whether the evidence, proof of their error, was brought to them in a convincing way or not. Therefore, their judgment is left to Allaah, and for us is the outer judgement with regards to them, which is that they are Muslims, and they died believing in Islaam, and they were buried in the graveyards of the Muslims. Therefore, they are Muslims.

Thus, the distinction made between *al-bid'ah al-mukaffirah* and *al bid'ah al-mufasssiqah* mentioned, firstly, it is a linguistic, technical difference which is a product of the scholars of philosophy. And secondly, there is no evidence to support it at all. Now I'd like to close the discussion on this issue with a *hadeeth* which will point you to what I mentioned earlier, that not everyone who does an act of disbelief, or disbelief has become confused to him, becomes a disbeliever. I mean by that a *hadeeth* in *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree* narrated by two great companions of the Prophet, Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree and Huṭhayfaa ibn Yamaan. They said that Allaah's Messenger said, "There was a man among those who were before you who was on his deathbed and he gathered his children around him. He said to them, "What kind of father was I to you?" They replied, "The best of fathers." He said, "I have never done a single good deed. So when I die, burn me, crush my body, and scatter the resulting ashes on a windy

day." His sons did so, but Allaah gathered his particles and asked him, "What made you do so?" He replied, "Fear of You." So Allaah forgave him. There's a question: did this man disbelieve by his statement "if Allaah were able to get a hold of me" or did he not disbelieve? He disbelieved, but Allaah forgave him. And we know from the Noble Qur'aan that Allaah will not forgive anyone who assigns partners to Him, and He forgives anything less than that for whomsoever he wishes. How do we understand this hadeeth in light of the obvious meaning of the Qur'aan? That He does not forgive one who assigns Him partners intentionally. What is your opinion of that condition? It is correct, but is it in the verse? No, it isn't. Where did we get it from? Thus is the *sharee'ah*. It is not taken from a single hadeeth or from a single verse, but is taken from a combination of all that is relevant to the issue.

Consequently, it is not only in *fiqh* that it is necessary to combine all of the relevant texts until we know the abrogating and the abrogated text, and the general from the specific, and the unconditional from the conditional, etc. In fact, this is much more needed in the case of '*aqeedah*'. When the scholars explained the verse **"Indeed Allaah will not forgive anyone who assigns partners to Him"**, they do not get into these details usually, because the issue to them is quite clear, it does not require these kinds of details. But when problems and confused issues arise at this time, the scholar is required to explain the knowledge that he has. So this man who made a will (i.e. in the above mentioned hadeeth) did not imagine that it contained incomparable wrong and misguidance. He sought to have himself burned in order to hide from his Lord, while Allaah said: **"He puts forth for Us a parable, and forgets his own creation. He says: 'Who will give life to these bones when they have rotted away and become dust?' Say: 'He who created them the first time will give life to them. And He is all-Knowing about every creation'."** And after that our Lord forgave him. Why? Because disbelief had not entered into the heart of that individual. It is only that he imagined his sins before Allaah and his fear of Him and that if Allaah reached him, he would give him a very severe punishment. This fear and humility blinded him from the correct '*aqeedah*', and so he made that will. And the hadeeth is clear in the way in which He told him, "*Get up because I have forgiven you.*"

Therefore, it is not suitable for us to imagine that Sayyid Qutb had fallen into *wahdatil wujud* (monism) as Ibn 'Arabee, for example, had; that he, meaning Sayyid Qutb, intended it and his heart was set on it like Ibn 'Arabee who misguided millions of Sufi Muslims, etc. Perhaps it was only a left over of some Sufi thought which came to his mind or to his heart while he was a prisoner, and he had not developed complete knowledge about the issue. And he wrote that statement which I was the first to criticize. We cannot rule that he was a disbeliever because we do not know that disbelief had become set in his heart or that the evidence of the error of his writing or thought was brought to him, especially while he was in his prison. I do not think that that was the case. Because of that we do not link the fact that a Muslim may do an act of disbelief with him being a disbeliever. We do not link those two issues together. That is first and foremost. And warning against this have been repeated. And certainly, we do not distinguish between innovations in '*aqeedah*' and innovations in acts of worship. Both of them are either misguidance or they are disbelief. Perhaps this answer is sufficient, O Abu 'Abdur-Rahmaan.

Questioner: Is praising the people of innovation, like at-Turaabee and people similar to him, permissible if they claim that they are serving Islaam and that they are striving for the its sake?

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: The answer will vary in varying situations. If the intended meaning of "praising him" is praising a Muslim who we think is an innovator and we do not say that he is actually an innovator - after this long lecture, we can distinguish between the two issues. If the intended meaning of praising him is defending him relative to the disbelievers, that is obligatory. If the intended meaning of praising him is beautifying his methodology and inviting people to it, then it is misguidance and will cause the misguidance of others and that is not permissible.

Questioner: Is it true what we hear that (one should) boycott in these times, or should that not be implemented?

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah):: He means to say it is preferable not to be implemented. What is correct is that boycotting is not implemented because the innovators and the corrupt are the

majority. It would be better to say it is preferably not implemented. Perhaps the questioner intended myself. Whether he intended myself or not, I say yes, that is the case. It is better that it is not implemented. And I already said in no uncertain terms previously when I gave the *Shaami* saying.

Questioner: If there did come into existence an environment in which the majority of those in it were from *ahlus Sunnah*, and there were some elements who innovated in Allaah's religion for example, should boycotting be implemented or should it not be in this circumstance?

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah): It is obligatory that we use wisdom in dealing with the situation. The faction which has the upper hand and is strong, if they boycott the faction which has deviated from the community, will that benefit the faction that is holding on firmly to the truth? Or will it harm them? Now that is relative to them. Secondly, will those who have been boycotted by the main group, will that benefit them or will it harm them? That has been previously answered. It is not appropriate or suitable that we take these issues emotionally or enthusiastically. Instead it should be done cautiously and with wisdom. For example, one of them goes off and holds a position contradictory to the rest of the group. The others quickly say this is *gheeratul Allaah* (i.e. being jealous about Allaah's law that they not be broken), so we will boycott him. It is better to be kind and gentle with him, try to guide him, advise him, etc. Be his companion for some time. Then if you give up hope and there does not seem to be any hope for him to change, first and foremost, and then it is feared that his sickness will spread to Zayd and Bakr (i.e. to others), at this point, he would be boycotted if it seems most likely that boycotting him would be the best treatment. And as it is said, the last method of treatment is isolation.

Today, I do not advise or encourage the youths to boycott because it hurts and harms much more than it benefits. The biggest evidence of it is the fitnah which is presently existing in al-Hijaaz. They're all brought together by the call to *tawheed*, the call to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. But some of them have their own unique activities, either in politics or in some other ideas which were not known before from any of the people of knowledge. [These ideas] could be erroneous or they could be correct, but we're not able to bear to hear anything which is new; especially if it is an affair which is rejected in our opinion. And immediately, we begin to fight him. This is a mistake, brother. "You wish a friend who has no faults. But does sandalwood burn without smoke?"

We wish if only the Ikhwaan al-Muslimeen will be with us on the principle of *tawheed* so that we would be with them. But they are not pleased with us even in the issues of *'aqeedah*. And they say that mentioning the differences has split up the group. These brothers, from whom some group has split off or they've split off from some group, and Allaah knows best, they are with us all along the way with regards to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and the methodology of the righteous predecessors. But they have brought something new in reality, some of which is in error and some of which is correct. So why should we spread division amongst ourselves and factionalism and fanaticism when before we were one unit? So we then became two. After being two groupings, we then became three. They became *fashariyyoon* and *surooriyyoon*, etc. Allaahu Akbar. And they were not split up for anything which deserves splitting up for. There is no difference in the great issues that it could not be conceived that the *salafees* would differ in. We all know well that the *sahaabah* had differences in some issues, but their methodology was one.

Thus, if one was to imagine that a group from *ahlus Sunnah wal jamaa'ah* and from the victorious group (*at-Taa'ifah al-Mansoorah*) has split off, we should take a hold of them with kindness and gentleness, brother, and we try to keep them with the *jamaa'ah*. And we do not boycott them and cut them off except if we fear from them. And that will not become apparent immediately. It is not that simply when somebody expresses an opinion, in which he goes against the opinion or position of the group that it is appropriate for us to immediately boycott that individual. It should be with done patience, until it becomes clear to us that perhaps Allaah will guide his heart or it becomes evident to us that cutting him off is the best.

Questioner: Is there anything necessary besides establishing the proof on the disbeliever for them to be classified a disbeliever, or an innovator for them to be classified an innovator, or the sinful, like convincing or removing the doubts?

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah): No. This is not a necessity, but what is necessary is knowledge. It is the knowledge by which the proof is established. He (i.e. the one establishing the proof) should be an inheritor of the Prophet (pbuh) and not any individual among the various individuals .

Questioner: Are the Jamaa'at at-Tableegh to be considered among the sects about whom the Prophet (pbuh) spoke? Are the Ikhwaan and the Tableegh from among the sects about whom the Prophet (pbuh) informed us?

Shaykh Naasirud-Din (rahimahullah): No, no. The Ikhwaan al-Muslimoon have in them members from all of the various factions. Among them are the Shee'ah, etc., etc. Consequently, it is not correct to put on them a single label. Instead, we say that whoever adapts a methodology contradicting the way among their individual members, that individual would not be from the saved sect. Instead, he would be from the destroyed sect. As regards a group, I would not even say that the *salafees* are from the saved sect. The *salafees* themselves. What do you think? The judgment is made on the individual.

Translated by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips is currently translating and editing tapes by Shaykh Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee (rahimahullaah) containing fataawaa (rulings) which address current issues facing the ummah.